

Art & Working Life slide-kit, Union Media Services

The following slides from the Art & Working Life slide-kit are reproduced here from a copy sited in the archive of Ian Burn. The accompanying script has been transcribed from *Art: Critical, Political*, a book edited by Sandy Kirby in 1996 focusing on Ian Burn's work in the Australian labour movement, as a key activist and historian of the 1980s. Only small edits and corrections were made and do not affect the integrity of the original, leaving the idiosyncrasies of Burn's writing style intact. The kit itself was produced by Burn for Union Media Services, a design and communications company working for trade unions primarily ran by himself and fellow art worker Ian Milliss. The slide-kit's purpose was to provide a short overview of the history of working class culture in Australia and give contemporary examples of the ways in which the Art & Working Life program was fostering cultural work in the labour movement.

As a joint initiative between the Australia Council for the Arts and the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the Art & Working Life program funded and promoted the creation of cultural activities by artists, art workers, and unions in and out of the workplace. As Burn and Kathy Muir wrote in 1992, the program aimed to 'encourage art practice and policy which is informed by the concerns and issues affecting workers own lives and acknowledges working class cultural traditions and the multicultural nature of those traditions.'¹ Terminated in 1986, it has an ambivalent legacy: some criticised it for catering too much to the desire of artists and the 'values of the artworld', while others saw it as an instrumentalisation of art for political aims.²

As an informational tool of this program, designed to be distributed amongst art workers, artists, and unions, its ideological claims are at the surface of its functioning and inherent to its purpose as a slide-kit. Below is Kirby's introduction, outlining Burn's use of parallel texts:

In 1984 Burn produced, through Union Media Services, an 'Art & Working Life' slide kit for the Australia Council, which he updated and revised two years later. Two texts were provided. One, to be read aloud, the other supplying more detailed back-up information on the projects, the artists involved and the policies supporting Art and Working Life projects. The optimist of the mid '80s is captured in the spoken text reproduced here with slides from the 1986 kit.

The second text is also reproduced but with editorial changes. Repetitive or additional information about publications (*Badges of Labour*, *Banners of Pride - aspects of working class celebration*; *All Our Working Culture*; *Land of Promises*; 'Art & Working Life', *Caper 13*; 'Art & Working Life', *Caper 18*; 'Working Class, Working Culture', *Caper 19*; 'Loco', *Caper 23*), photographic displays, film hire and music recordings has not been included. Union titles have been retained although amalgamations have lead to many name changes since the slide kit was prepared.³

Nicholas Tammens

1

Kathie Muir and Ian Burn, *Creative Alliances : Unions & the Arts : Art & Working Life in the 1990s*, Sydney, N.S.W.: Union Media Services Pty Ltd, 1992

2

For further information, see Ann Stephen, *On Looking at Looking: The art & politics of Ian Burn*, The Miegunyah Press, 2006

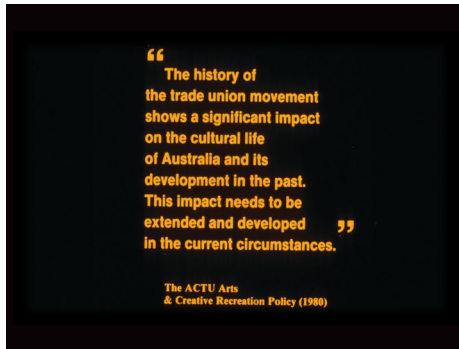
3

Sandy Kirby, in Ian Burn, *Art: Critical, Political*, University of Western Sydney, 1996, p.11

Slide 1 (Title slide)



Slide 2 (ACTU policy quote)



'The history of the trade union movement shows a significant impact on the cultural life of Australia and its development in the past. This impact needs to be extended and developed in the current circumstances.'

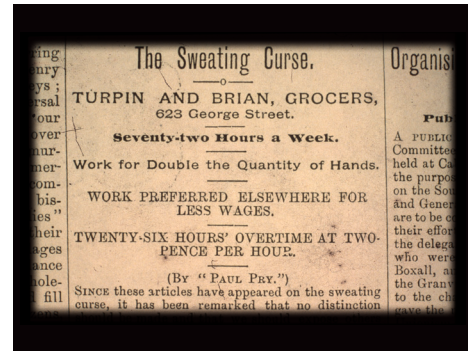
ACTU Arts & Creative Recreation Policy, 1980.

Slide 3 (Tom Roberts, 'Shearing the Rams')



Sometimes works of art, like this, depict the 'dignity of labour' but are often there is little dignity in the conditions of labour...

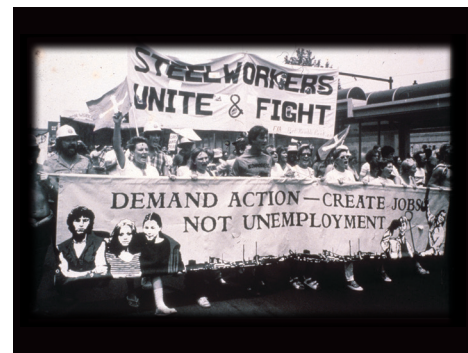
Slide 4 (Newspaper headlines: Sweating)



...no matter whether it is the late nineteenth century or the late twentieth century.

These headlines are from the Australian Workman (The Official Organ of the Trades and Labor Council of New South Wales) 21 February 1891. 'Sweating' refers to very hard labour for low pay and under poor working conditions, especially in the tailoring or clothing trades.

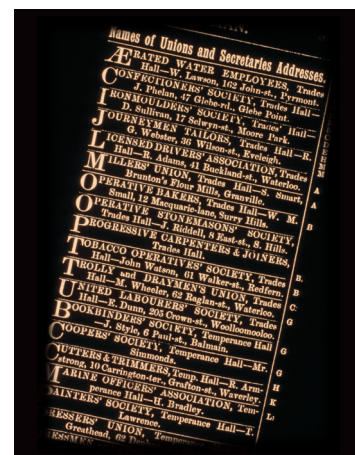
Slide 5 (Right To Work march, 1982)



For these reasons, trade unions were formed to protect the interests of working people...

The Right To Work march from Wollongong to Sydney (85km) took place in November 1982. The banner was produced by Redback Graphix and commissioned by the Wollongong Out of Workers Union.

Slide 6 (List of unions, 1891)



...and became the organised structure of the labour movement which now includes nearly 3 million workers or 55 per cent of the workforce.

This list of early trade unions is taken from the back page of the Australian Workman, 21 February 1891.

Slide 7 (Stonemasons' banner)



While building by hand the 'temples of culture' - the art galleries and the universities - trades unionists developed their own cultural traditions, closer to the needs and interests of their members. One important tradition has been the trade union banner...

In 1856, stonemasons in Melbourne and Sydney were the first workers in the world to successfully strike for an eight hour working day. This banner was commissioned from the Sydney firm of Althouse and Geiger in 1903, to replace older banners which were beyond repair. The building on the left is the portico of the Art Gallery of New South Wales; on the right is the Great Hall of Sydney University. Both are examples of the stonemasons' skills.

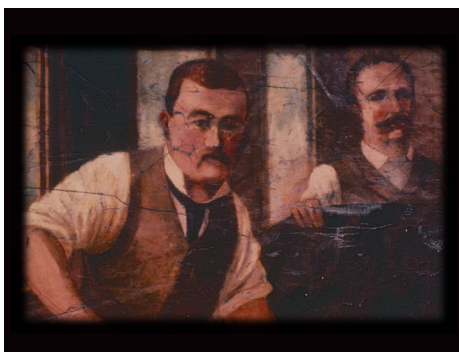
Slide 8 (Lithgow march, 1900s)



...carried ceremoniously in both struggle and celebration. The banners convey the sense of pride...

An Eight Hour day march, Lithgow, New South Wales, c. 1900-1910

Slide 9 (Pressers' banner - detail)



...pride in trade and craft and skills, and in the knowledge which is part of those skills.

The Pressers' banner was made in the late 1880s. Note the flat iron (or 'goose') entwined with ribbon hanging in the floral decorations.

Slide 10 (Pressers' banner)



Trade union banners have been a continuous tradition in Australia from the middle of the nineteenth century to the present, with the style of banners changing with the period...

Slide 11 (Carpenters and Joiners' banner)



...as with this nineteen-thirties banner.

Today, the cultural importance of the older banners is being recognised and many are being conserved and displayed in museums and art galleries. And new banners are being commissioned.

Banner for the Western Australian branch of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners painted by Harald Vike, as a project of the Workers' Art Guild.

Slide 12 (Miscellaneous Workers' banner, Newcastle)



Some are based on traditional designs...

This one is of a number of banners painted by Birgitte Hansen, in conjunction with the Newcastle Workers' Cultural Action Committee. The design for the 1983 banner of the Miscellaneous Workers' Union is based on the old banner of the Leather Dressers who became affiliated with the Miscellaneous Workers. The figures are of two union members, a nightwatchman and a school cleaner and the vignette shows a view of Newcastle including the hospital where many union members work.

Slide 13 (South Coast Miners Federation banner)



...while others reflect contemporary designs and techniques.

Banner produced by Redback Graphix (with others) for the South Coast Miners Federation (NSW) in 1981. It has been prominent in many marches and industrial actions in the Wollongong area.

Slide 14 (Metal Workers' banner, Newcastle)



Banner painted by Birgitte Hansen for the Newcastle Metal Workers' Union in 1983.

Slide 15 (AFULE banner, SA)



A banner can incorporate the wheels of a locomotive...

Banner painted by Ann Newmarch for the Australian Federated Union of Locomotive Engineers, South Australia, for their centenary in 1986.

Slide 16 (Food Preservers banner, SA)



...or the patterns of labels from preserved fruit cans.

Banner painted and appliqued by Kathie Muir for the Food Preservers' Union of South Australia in 1986. The fruit designs on the border are based on the traditional labels glued onto fruit boxes and cans.

Slide 17 (Timber Workers' banner, Victoria)



A rich variety of techniques have been used, from traditional painting like this banner...

Banner for the Australian Timber Workers' Union in Victoria painted by Geoff Hogg (with assistance by Ilma Jasper and Kaye Douglas, and backing sewn by Beverley Jasper) in 1984. Aspects of the design are based on an earlier Timber Workers' banner.

Slide 18 (HEF No.1 banner, Vic)



...to silkscreening images onto the canvas, as with this banner, to sewn and appliqued banners.

Banner painted and printed (silk-screened) by Kathy Walters and Julia Church for the Hospital Employees' Federation, Victoria No.1 Branch, in 1984.

Slide 19 (HEF No.2 banner, Vic)



These banners continue and extend the idea of an art related to work...

Banner painted for the Hospital Employees' Federation, Victoria No.2 Branch, by Ilma Jasper (with poles designed and carved by Ted Titley) in 1984. The painting is based on photographic documentation of Willsmere (Kew Mental Hospital), with a map plan providing the structural basis for the design.

Slide 20 (HEF No.2 banner, Vic - detail)



...rather than leisure. It is an art informed by the concerns and issues affecting workers' own lives, and sets out to revalue the work experience.

Slide 21 (Actors Equity banner - front)



Today, this tradition is still growing. The banners continue to serve their traditional function...

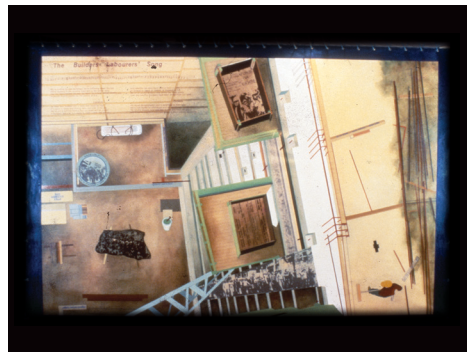
Banner for Actors Equity of Australia commissioned through Union Media Services, designed by Michael Fitzjames and applied by Nola Taylor in 1984, with the material applied mostly by hand.

Slide 22 (Actors Equity banner - back)



...but, with today's communications, their use is being expanded, as the banners increasingly become the symbols of the union issues to television audiences throughout Australia.

Slide 23 (BLF banner - back)



There is also a demand on artists to innovate, to develop imagery and expression specific to the experiences of the union members today. This banner is based on the view looking down from the top of a building under construction, a sight immediately recognisable to a building construction worker.

These banners are a small part of a resurgence of interest by trade unions in art activities...

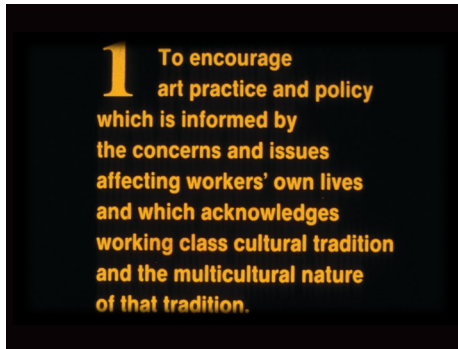
Banner painted and printed in 1983 for the Builders Labourers' Federation by Gwenda Wiseman, while working as artist-in-residence with the BLF in Melbourne. Like the Equity banner, each side can be displayed separately.

Slide 24 (BLF banner - front)



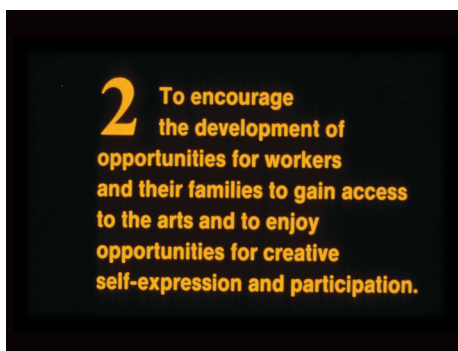
...and a renewed commitment by artists to work with the labour movement. Nothing like this has happened since the 1940s, since the upsurge of community and union cultural activities under the Curtin Labor Government. Many of today's activities have been encouraged and supported by the Art & Working Life program of the Australia Council. The first two objectives of the policy declare its major aims...

Slide 25 (Australia Council policy - 1)



'To encourage art practice and policy which is informed by the concerns and issues affecting workers' own lives and which acknowledges working class cultural tradition and the multicultural nature of that tradition.'

Slide 26 (Australia Council policy - 2)



'To encourage the development of opportunities for workers and their family to gain access to the arts and to enjoy opportunities for creative self-expression and participation.'

The program operates through arts officers appointed to peak union councils, and through individual projects with strong trade union involvement.

Slide 27 (Working on mural designs)



These may be in the form of residencies, with a professional artist placed with a union or labour council to develop particular projects.

Geoff Hogg, artist-in-residence at the Victorian Trades Hall in 1984, working on the design and painting the mural at Museum Station in Melbourne.

Slide 28 (Painting the mural)



A function of a resident artist can also be to encourage other arts involvement on the part of workers...

Slide 29 (Poster: Williamstown Naval Dockyard)



...for example, assisting workers to design and print their own posters as with this one produced by workers at the Williamstown Naval Dockyard.

Commissioned by the Shop Committee, this print was done in 1984, through a poster workshop co-ordinated by Melbourne artist Ian Robertson. It is one of a series of projects developed at the worksite. Others include murals, exhibitions, concerts, publications, and educational programs.

Slide 30 (Photograph: miners' sit-in, Preston Colliery)



Unlike the banner tradition, photography has a young history in the labour movement in Australia, with photographers still evolving ways of representing industrial issues and work processes. With this project, a photographer-in-residence with Newcastle Trades Hall...

Warwick Pearse recorded the miners' sit-in in 1983 at Preston Extended Colliery, near Gunnedah, New South Wales for the Newcastle Workers Cultural Action Committee. Fourteen miners occupied the colliery to protest the loss of ninety-one jobs; with support of friends and families, they sat-in for fifty-four days and finally regained fifty-five of the lost jobs.

Slide 31

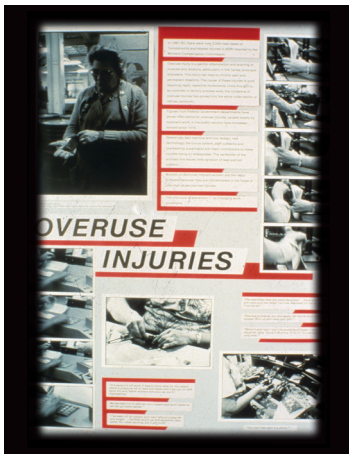
(Photography: miners' sit-in, Preston Colliery)



...documented the miners' sit-in to regain jobs at Preston Colliery. The photographic record has been made into a travelling exhibition and published. Photographers have also been documenting health hazards and developing educational material for the workplace.

Slide 32

(Photography: 'Re-presenting Work', Lidcombe)



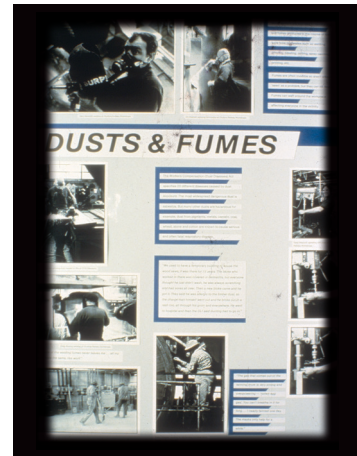
Initiated by Lidcombe Workers' Health Centre, this display draws attention to occupational health and safety issues, combining photographs and description with direct comment from workers.

'Re-presenting Work' is a project of the Lidcombe Workers' Centre, in conjunction with six unions and two combined union committees. It was produced in 1984 by Julie Donaldson, Helen Grace and Ruth Waller, with assistance from Warwick Pearse, John Jensen and a number of union organisers and delegates.

The project was directed towards occupational health and safety issues, but also encourages discussion about the use of photography in the workplace and suggests ways in which unions and rank-and-file groups might put photography to their use. The photographs have been organised into a display which has been shown in union offices and workplaces.

Slide 33

(Photography: 'Re-presenting Work', Lidcombe)



Projects like this can serve a useful role in campaigns for better working conditions, as well as in raising questions about why artists can be brought into a workplace to take photographs...

Slide 34

(Photography: 'Re-presenting Work', Lidcombe)



...but workers generally are denied the right to photograph the places where they work.

Slide 35 (Photography: AWU/Oliver Strewe)



A range of documentary projects have now been developed with unions, photographing rural workers...

As part of its centenary in 1986, the Australian Workers' Union initiated a wide range of celebrations and projects. One of these projects, undertaken by Oliver Strewe, was the photographic documentation of the variety of work done by AWU members. A selection of these photographs has been made into an exhibition which has travelled widely.

Slide 36

(Photography: Michael Gallagher,
Maritime Workers, WA)



...and maritime workers. The photographs may be used in union campaigns and journals - or can be turned into displays which tour workplaces, union offices and a variety of public venues.

As photographer-in-residence in 1985 with the Maritime Workers' Union in Western Australia, Michael Gallagher documented a range of activities of the union members. The photographs have appeared regularly in the union publication and used in exhibitions.

Slide 37 (Railways display, Central Station, Sydney)



This display on the history of railway work was launched at Central Railway Station, Sydney, during the 1985 ACTU Congress.

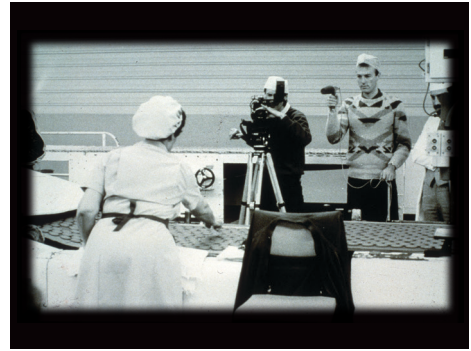
Slide 38 (Railways display, Central Station, Sydney)



It documents the rich, diverse and changing nature of railway work, and workers' responses in music, verse and cartooning.

The Railway Unions Cultural History exhibition focuses on the history and experiences of railway workers. Conceived and assembled by Brian Dunnett, shop steward at Chullora locomotive workshops, the exhibition consists of over thirty panels and a soundtrack with poems, songs and interviews with railworkers past and present. It has toured widely and created enormous interest wherever it has been displayed.

Slide 39 (Shooting a video, SA)



Film-making, like photography, has a comparatively young history in the union movement. Until recently, the only notable fieldwork was produced during the 1950s by the Waterside Workers Federation Film Unit. Given we have one of the significant labour histories in the world, surprisingly little of it has been documented or recreated on film.

A crew shooting a video in the workplace is shown here. This is one of the 'All Our Working Lives' projects, part of the centenary celebrations of the United Trades and Labor Council of South Australia in 1984.

Slide 40 (Film: 'Kemira')



This film documents the sit-in at the BHP-owned Kemira Colliery in 1982. The sit-in was a protest against the retrenchment of miners, their response to the crisis facing the steel and mining industries in Wollongong. The film follows the impact of these events on the miners and their families.

Directed by Tom Zubrycki, 'Kemira' shows thirty-one miners occupying the mine for 16 days. The film covers the stay-in, the vigil kept by wives and workmates at the pit-top, the combined miners-steelworkers march through Wollongong and the demonstration which climaxed in the storming of Parliament House in Canberra.

Slide 41 (Film: 'Kemira')



A film like this is not just an important document of contemporary history, but it also keeps alive the industrial issues involved...

Slide 42 (Film: 'Kemira')



...and can be used to encourage discussion in workplaces and community groups...

Slide 43 (Video: 'Acceptable Risks, APTU')



...and complements the many excellent films and videos being produced on health and safety and other industrial issues.

This video was made by the Australian Postal and Telecommunications Union and deals with how a union handles health and safety issues relating to its members.

Slide 44 (Theatre: 'Loco', Sidetrack)



Theatre has a strong place in the history in the labour movement, with over fifty years continuous production by the New Theatre. Recently, plays have been developed with workers in their actual workplaces...

Slide 45 (Theatre: 'Loco', Sidetrack)



The play, 'Loco', tells the story of a day in the lives of a group of railway workers in the State locomotive workshops. The work routines, relieved by daily conflicts...

Slide 46 (Theatre: 'Loco', Sidetrack)



...and on-the-job humour, become a vehicle for expressing the railworkers' hopes and concerns.

'Loco', directed by Don Mamouny, was developed by Sidetrack Theatre in 1983 at the State Rail Authority's locomotive workshops at Chullora in Sydney. The research, writing and rehearsals all took place in the workshops, and culminated in highly successful performances at Chullora before crowds of workers, families and friends. (Photographs by Choo Tan)

Slide 47 (Theatre: 'Working Woman's Lunch', Me'n'u)



Theatre like this gives an expressive form to people's work experiences, and has its greatest impact and meaning when performed in familiar surrounds of the workplace.

Slide 48 (Theatre: 'Working Woman's Lunch', Me'n'u)



An Art & Working Life festival was held during the 1983 ACTU Congress in Sydney and included a number of workplace-based performances by theatre groups from Queensland, NSW, Victoria and SA. Jan Cornall and Brian Joyce of Me'n'u are seen performing in 'Working Woman's Lunch' at Talk Talk Poultry, Sydney.

Slide 49 (Music: union recordings)



The labour movement has always had a tradition of stirring music and songs, though much of it remains unrecorded. Recently, songs have been commissioned and recorded to support industrial campaigns and celebrate important labour events.

Two examples of songs commissioned by unions as part of industrial campaigns. 'The Hole in the Wall', produced for the Australian Bank Employees' Union, makes the case against the indiscriminate introduction of new technology in the banking industry. It was written and performed by Graeme Bechaz. 'Give Us a Shorter Working Week' was part of the campaign for shorter hours in the metal trades industries. It was written and performed by Eric Bogle for the Amalgamated Metal Workers' Union.

Slide 50 (Music: 'Ta Paratragonda')



In one instance, a musician-in-residence at the Victorian Trades hall composed a song cycle - a documentary in music about immigrant life and work in Australia.

Tassos Ionnides was a composer-in-residence from June 1982 to May 1983 when he researched and composed 'Ta Paratragonda (Songs of Remonstrance)'. The song cycle is scored for a choir, four soloists and an orchestra, including Mediterranean and Australian instruments in addition to conventional orchestral instruments. The lyrics of the 18 songs which comprise the piece were written by Demetre Kesisoglou. 'Ta Paratragonda' was performed at the Melbourne Town Hall in 1983 and was later shown on national television.

Slide 51 (Music: Roger Montgomery, Pilbara, WA)



In another example, a musician gathered songs and poetry written by people working and living in the Pilbara mining region. This has been published and a selection recorded.

Roger Montgomery in the Pilbara, 1985.

Slide 52 (Labor Day Concert, Melbourne)



There is also a renewed interest in the traditional celebration of Labor Day...

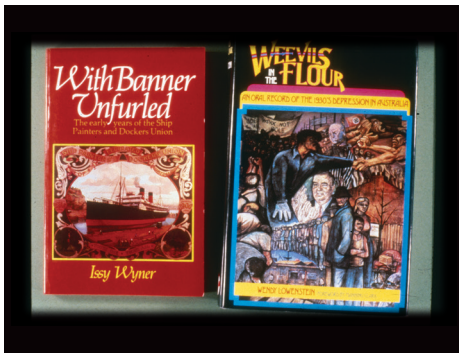
Slide 53 (Labor Day Concert, Melbourne)



...with music, performances and entertainment.

As part of its activities for 1986 Labour Day, the Trade Union Labour Day Celebration Committee organised a special celebration at the Melbourne Concert Hall. Titled 'Stop Laughing, This Could Be Serious', the concert consisted of satire, songs and comic sketches about work, especially work with machines.

Slide 54 (Books)

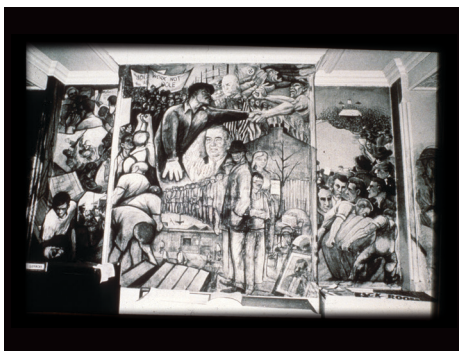


Literature has also made a strong contribution to labour culture. However, there remains much work to be done reclaiming labour's history through the direct experiences of working people.

With Banner Unfurled, a history of the early years of the Ship Painters' and Dockers' Union in Sydney, was researched and written by the Union Secretary, Issy Wyner, and published for the Union's centenary celebrations. The cover reproduces the Union's second banner, painted in 1903 and restored in 1979 at the Union's expense.

Weevils in the Flour is an oral history of the 1930s Depression in Australia, by Wendy Lowenstein (Melbourne, 1978). The cover shows a detail of the Sydney Waterside Workers' Federation mural.

Slide 55 (Mural: WWF, Sydney)



Murals can be a vital way of recording and celebrating labour history, though more often they are used by management to decorate workplaces for their own ends. Until recently, few murals had been

produced for trade unions. This one was painted during the 1950s for the Waterside Workers Federation offices in Sydney.

The mural was designed by Rod Shaw and worked on by the WWF art group and subsequently by other artists.

Slide 56 (Mural: BLF/Rialto, Melbourne)



With the spread of community arts in Australia, artists have been developing murals sympathetic to the ideals of trade unions. This seven-storey high mural, above the rear entrance to the Rialto building in Melbourne, is about technological changes in the building industry and their impact on builders labourers.

The artist-in-residence with the BLF worked on the mural alongside the construction workers working on the building.

'From Hod to the Favco' mural painted by Gwenda Wiseman in 1985.

Slide 57 (Mural: ACI canteen, Sydney)



This mural was painted in 1981 in the workers canteen at the ACI Glassworks in Sydney. What kind of subject-matter should an artist use? Should a mural reflect life in the factory? Do workers want to be reminded of work during their lunch break? How will management react? These are a few of the questions an artist must consider.

One of the four sections of the mural painted in 1981 by Michiel Dolk, Marilyn Fairsky, and Jeff Stewart in the works canteen of the ACI Glassworks in Sydney.

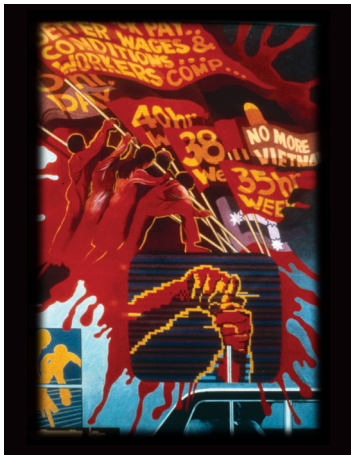
Slide 58 (Mural: TLC, Launceston)



Painted in 1984, this mural covers the wall of the Trades Hall building in Launceston.

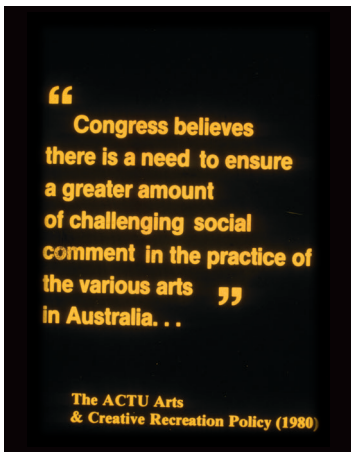
Designed and painted by Bob Clutterbuck, it was commissioned by the Launceston Trades and Labor Council.

Slide 59 (Mural: TLC, Launceston - detail)



Political subject-matter can sometimes become controversial. But the great strength of labour culture is that it is both artistic and political. The ACTU policy declares...

Slide 60 (ACTU policy quote)



'Congress believes there is a need to ensure a greater amount of challenging social comment in the practice of the various arts in Australia...'

Many of the earliest opportunities for creative social comment occurred in the labour movement's own media, which began in the late nineteenth century.

Slide 61 (Early labour media)



This media created opportunities for graphic artists, for publication of poetry and stories, and for the development of labour and industrial journalism.

A collection of early labour newspapers is shown here. *The Worker* (Queensland) was published fortnightly from March 1890, supported by 15 unions of the Australian Labour Federation, and edited by William Lane. *The Worker* was formerly *The Hummer*, which was first published by the Wagga branch of the Amalgamated Shearers Union and General Labourers Union in October 1881; it was later renamed the *Australian Worker*. *The Republican* was published briefly in 1887—88.

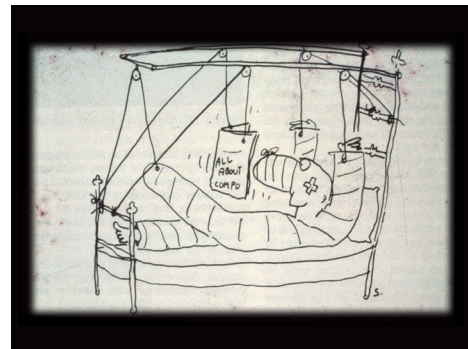
Slide 62 (Recent trade union media)



Today, trade union media can offer the same opportunities for artists, writers, photographers, and can be an effective place for discussing cultural activities in the labour movement. Currently, a wide range of artists are being given work in union publications and campaigns.

Examples of current union journals, newspapers and occasional publications.

Slide 63 (Graphic: 'All about compo')



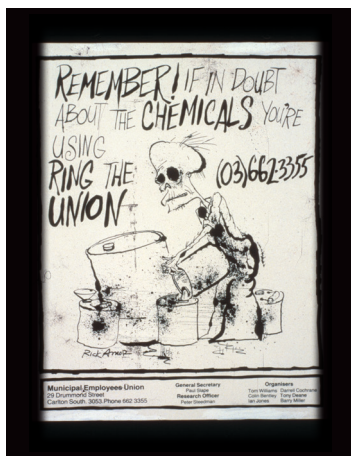
Graphic for the Administrative and Clerical Officers Association (ACOA) Journal by Stephen Scheduling.

Slide 64 (Graphic: 'Workplace delegate')



Graphic for ACOA by Rick Amor

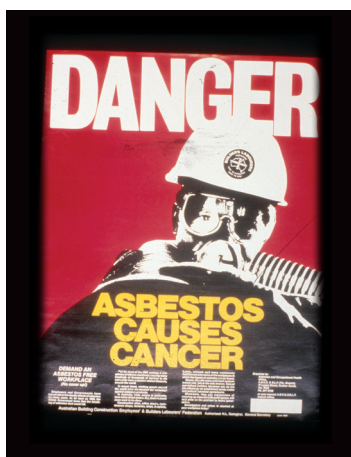
Slide 65 (Poster: MEU - 'Chemicals')



The effectiveness of posters has been an important factor in many union campaigns - for example, around working conditions...

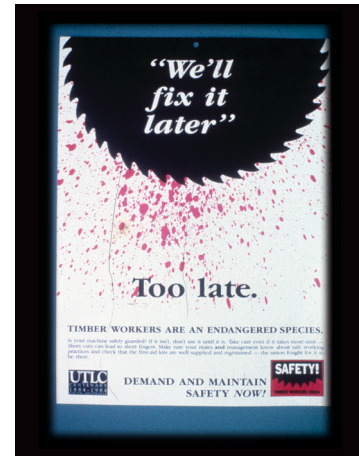
Poster by Rick Amor, commissioned by the Municipal Employees' Union, Melbourne, 1982

Slide 66 (Poster: BLF - 'Asbestos')



Poster by Publicity Works for the Builders Labourers' Federation, 1984.

Slide 67 (Poster: Timber Workers - 'Too late')



Slide 68 (Poster: FCU - 'Sexual harassment')



...and around employment opportunities...

Poster by Lyn Finch for the Federated Clerks' Union, Queensland, 1984.

Slide 69 (Poster: AIEU - 'Often the best man...')



...and about the pressures imposed by new technology.

Poster by Bob Clutterbuck for the Australian Insurance Employees' Union, Melbourne, 1985.

Slide 70 (Poster: ATEA - 'Stress')



Poster by Lyn Finch, Sioban Hayes, Damien Ledwich for the Australian Telecommunications Employees' Association, Queensland, 1985.

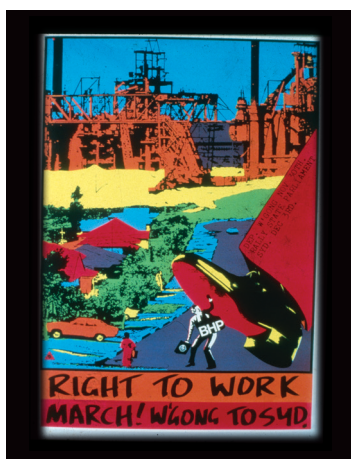
Slide 71 (Poster: BHP)



The involvement of artists with trade unions means changing traditional notions of artistic practice. Often the art is created in response to immediate needs.

Poster designed by Gregor Cullen/Redback Graphix (based on a 1920s graphic by Percy Leason) for the Port Kembla Branch of the Federated Ironworkers' Association, 1983.

Slide 72 (Poster: Right To Work march)



This gives much of the art a utilitarian character, which does not mean its artistic value is less. The quality of the art is different, not lower.

Poster produced by Redback Graphix to publicise the Right To Work march in 1982.

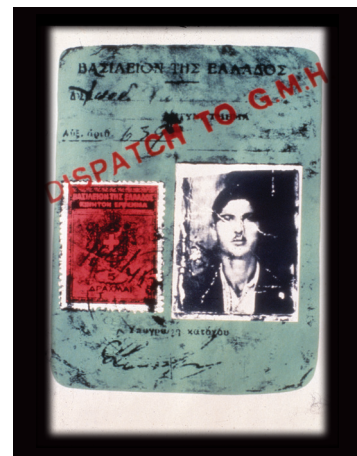
Slide 73 (Poster: 'Land of Promises')



These activities also offer an effective way of bringing to the foreground the multicultural nature of Australian society.

'Land of Promises' was a project in which community artists assisted immigrant community members to document some of the experiences and concerns of post WW2 immigrants to Australia. A series of silkscreen prints was produced and toured extensively. This print is by Guiliana Otmarich, 'In your painful separation from loved ones and homeland we are near in thought and heart', 1982.

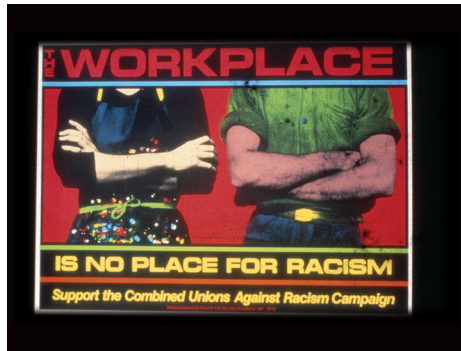
Slide 74 (Poster: 'Land of Promises')



This series of posters, produced by immigrant workers, explores the concerns and experiences of post-war immigrants within working communities in Australia. Posters can also remind us that...

Eugenia Hill's print, 'Dispatch to GMH', c.1981. 'Land of Promises' was developed by Andrew and Eugenia Hill, with Community Media Association, Adelaide.

Slide 75 (Poster: CUAR - 'Racism')

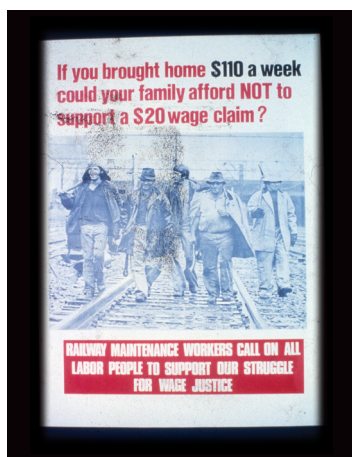


...the workplace is no place for racism. This art is not simply about working people, but makes a direct contribution to the ideals of labour and the union movement.

This slide presentation has shown only a small part of the activities currently developing. It hasn't shown the factory festivals, the many crafts and so-called amateur activities. It hasn't considered the employment issues and within Aboriginal communities. It hasn't talked about the potential of artists to contribute to product design of work environment design.

Poster produced by Gregor Cullen/Redback Graphix for the Combined Unions Against Racism, Sydney, 1985.

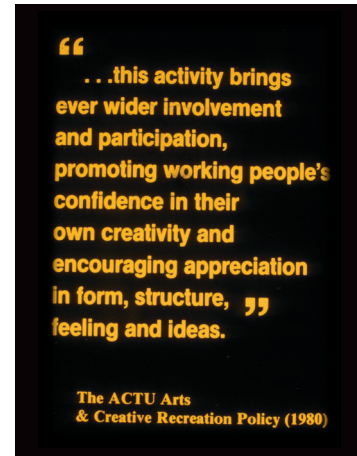
Slide 76 (Poster: ARU - 'If you brought home...')



Some of what you've seen here has been assisted by the Australia Council or other funding bodies. But much of it has not. Much of it has been produced solely by the initiative of unions and paid for by their members. Today, the rapidly expanding collaboration between artists and trade unions is acknowledging a fundamental relation between culture and labour. It is enriching the labour movement - but it is also enriching Australian culture in its widest sense.

Poster produced by the Australian Railways Union and used widely, pasted up on streets, in a 1979 campaign.

Slide 77 (ACTU policy quote)



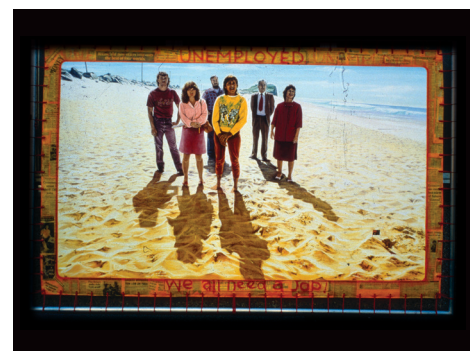
'...this activity brings ever wider involvement and participation, promoting working people's confidence in their own creativity and encouraging appreciation in form, structure, feeling and ideas'.

Slide 78 (Banner: 'Don't export our jobs')



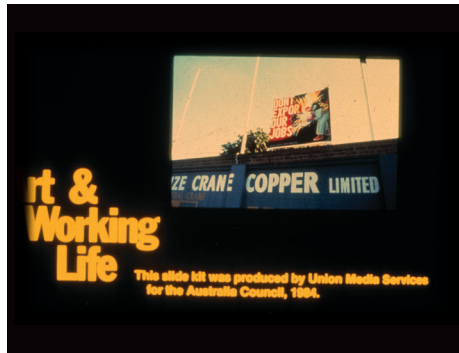
This banner, designed and painted by Marie McMahon, was commissioned by Austral Bronze Crane Copper Combined Works Committee during their dispute with the Government over the decision to give the contract for production of new Australian coins to a South Korean company. Produced in 1984, this was the second banner commissioned in this dispute. The inset in the final image shows the banner during the dispute, in place at the top of the factory building.

Slide 79 (Banner: Unemployed Groups, Newcastle)



Banner designed and painted in 1984 by Birgitte Hansen, in conjunction with the Workers' Cultural Action Committee, for use by various unemployed groups in the Newcastle area. The banner is held at the Newcastle Trades Hall.

Slide 80 (End slide - with banner insert)



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